

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/627,364

Applicant(s)

JANNOT, PAUL R.

Examiner

Melanie Tyson

Art Unit

3731

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Appeal Brief received on 31 May 2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-7.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

DETAILED ACTION

This action is in response to the appeal brief filed on 31 May 2007. Applicant's arguments have been fully considered and are persuasive. The FINAL rejection dated 30 November 2006 has been withdrawn.

Allowable Subject Matter

1. Claims 1-7 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The prior art of record does not disclose or suggest a motivation to combine an elongated body formed of resilient material and having a plurality of slits being sized to receive and grip a surgical suture, a pocket means adjacent each slit for receiving and retaining a hemostat attached to a suture against being pulled through the body, and an attachment means for facilitating attachment of the body to a surgical drape or other supportive surface. Applicant has invoked 112, 6th paragraph, wherein the Applicant discloses in the specification that the "pocket means" comprises tapered bores (page 4). Examiner agrees that Koseki teaches away from retaining hemostats, and Lahay lacks a pocket means for receiving and retaining a hemostat attached to a suture against being pulled through the body (i.e., tapered bores).

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

3. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with David A. Greenlee on 27 August 2007.

4. Amend line 2 of the ABSTRACT: surgical procedure, ~~[[comprising]]~~ including an elongated body...

5. Amend claim 2, line 3: hemostat in the pocket ~~[[but]]~~ and prevent the hemostat...

6. Amend claim 3, line 2: adjacent each slit and ~~[[through passage]]~~ pocket for identifying...

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Patents 3,515,129 (Truhan), 5,207,703 (Jain), and 4,274,398 (Scott) all disclose retainer device for sutures, however, fail to disclose a pocket means adjacent each slit for receiving and retaining a hemostat attached to a suture against being pulled through the body as claimed and disclosed by the applicant.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melanie Tyson whose telephone number is (571) 272-9062. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday 8:30-7.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jackie Ho can be reached on (571) 272-4696. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Melanie Tyson *MT*
August 28, 2007


(JACKIE) TAN-UYEN HO
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER